



Walk with a Future Doc: Creating a framework for a medical student organization to promote community health and wellness

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Needs Assessment Summary

Walk with a Future Doc (WWAFD) at The Ohio State University College of Medicine (OSUCOM) was created by medical students to serve the community through education and engagement in physical activity. The decision to create this program was based off of research highlighting the needs of our local community:

- In the United States, chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity account for 87% of healthcare expenditure [1].
- Last year, the rate of obesity in Franklin County was found to be higher than the national average (30.7% vs. 27.6%) [2].
- In 2015, majority of adults failed to meet the recommendations for aerobic physical activity [3].

These facts demonstrate a real need for change within Franklin County. Exercise has been shown to promote weight loss and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and HbA1c levels among T2DM patients. In addition to emphasizing the importance of physical activity, WWAFD will provide basic healthcare education to help members of the community become more active participants in their health.

Program Development/Planning

Purpose: To offer opportunities for community members to take charge of their health and to learn more about maintaining a healthy lifestyle while simultaneously allowing for informal, constructive interactions with future physicians

Design: Medical student leaders worked with OSU administrators and WWAD employees to establish and maintain an official WWAFD chapter at OSU. We then planned two formal walks at Columbus MetroParks in September and October of 2017. Pre-medical students, community members and medical students were in attendance. Walks started with a brief presentation on a health-related topic and were followed with an hour long walk through the park.

Short Term Goals

- Establish a sustainable student organization Walk with a Future Doc (WWAFD) at The Ohio State University
- Organize and facilitate at least 2 walks at Columbus MetroParks, aiming to increase the number of participants at each walk

Long Term Goals

- Empower community members to develop lasting healthy behaviors
- Provide the national Walk with a Doc office with best practices for setting up a new WWAFD chapter that can be shared with other interested medical schools across the country



Image 1: Walking at Park of Roses



Program Implementation

Pre-Implementation

- **Objective 1: Understand the mission and vision of Walk with a Doc**
 - Held in-person meetings with the Walk with a Doc founder and team to understand how to embody the values of the organization into our work
- **Objective 2: Form an official club at The Ohio State University**
 - Established organization leaders and advisor
 - Completed required leadership training and legal paperwork required by OSU and WWAD to ensure sustainability of the organization
 - Accessed funding for marketing costs and programmatic budgeting
- **Objective 3: Create a marketing and communications strategy for the first walk**
 - Obtained email list serves of potentially interested community members
 - Distributed flyers at the Columbus Metropolitan Library and the location of the walking event

Implementation: Walk One

- First walk was hosted in September at Scioto Audubon Metro Park
- Attendance: Two community members
- Assessment: Walkers in attendance learned about the walk from word of mouth, not from our marketing efforts. We also faced logistical issues with weather and traffic
- Future actions: Increase our marketing efforts and reassess walk time and location before our next event

Refinement: Walk Two

- Second walk was hosted in October at Columbus Park of Roses
- Improved accessibility of location:
 - Direct bus route for access by OSU students and community members
- Improved marketing efforts:
 - Wider distribution of flyers
 - Targeted email recruitment to interested undergraduate students and Park of Roses volunteers
- Attendance: Six community members
 - Two community members recruited by word of mouth, three regular Park of Roses visitors saw the posted flyers, and one undergraduate student learned about the event via email

Program: Walk with a Future Doc Logic Model

Situation: Patients are often encouraged by their doctors to be more active. However, without concrete examples or instructions on how to do so, many struggle to follow these recommendations. Walk with a Future Doc was created to offer opportunities for patients to take charge of their health and to learn more about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. These walks offer a unique opportunity for patients and future health care providers to come together to strive for a healthier community.

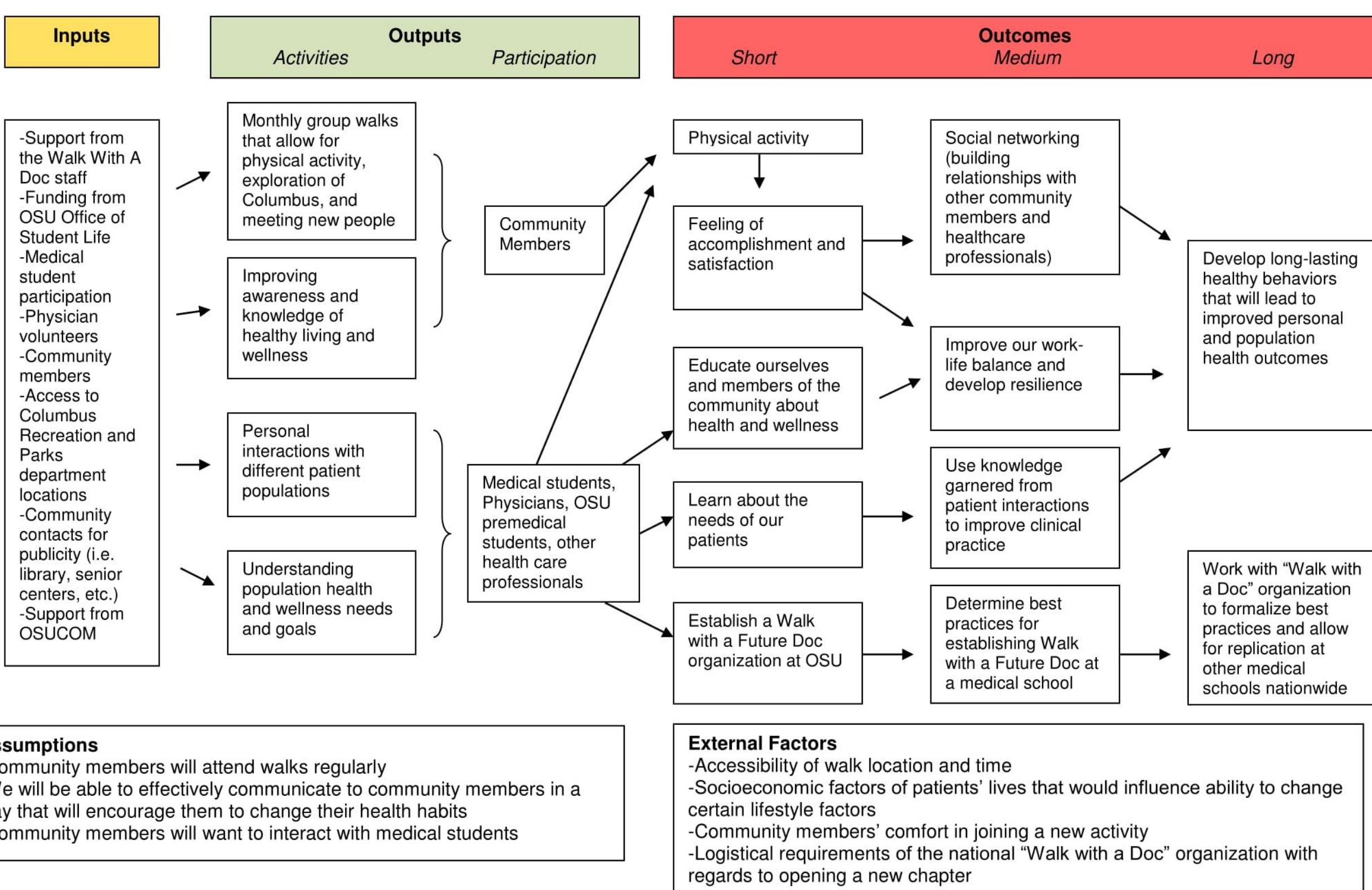


Figure 1: Logic Model

Program Evaluation

Data Collection and Resources

- Attendance was our main data metric
 - Quantitative data was based on the number of participants not affiliated with the WWAD or WWAFD organization
 - Qualitative data described how participants learned about each walk
- The bulk of monetary resources were allocated to marketing materials
 - The poster for the involvement fair, fliers, and associated distribution costs were our three main expenses
- Human capital

Data:

- Two community members at the September Walk
- Six community members at the October Walk

Interpretation:

- Developed WWAFD into a sustainable organization at The Ohio State University through gaining club status and recruiting future leadership
- Successful walks were organized in September and October with a 200% increase in participation between walks
- Refined marketing strategy to focus on the effective efforts, such as targeted email marketing efforts and reduced use of flyers
- Engaged in ongoing informal conversations with community members and held brief lectures related to healthcare in an effort to foster long-lasting healthy behavior
- A *Best-Practices and FAQ for Successfully forming a WWAFD Chapter* has been developed, submitted, and approved by the national Walk with a Doc

Future Directions

A large part of this project involved developing a framework for others to implement this style of community partnership at different medical schools. We have created a list of best practices for future groups.

- Each WWAFD chapter should have access to a point person within WWAD
- Become a club in order to secure funding
- Create an official group email address
- At minimum, the leadership roles should be: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Communication Chair.
- Location choice:
 - Easily accessed from campus so that those without vehicles may attend
 - Already has a vibrant walking community
 - Adequate lighting for evening (and winter) walks
 - Well-maintained walkways
 - Dog-friendly
 - Has an easily identifiable shelter house or landmark for the meeting point
- Discuss pedestrian safety regularly
- The likely culprit for low participation yield is a deficient marketing strategy.
- Be cordial, prompt, and friendly
- Forge win-win community partnerships

References

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